



Kids Get Care

www.metrokc.gov/health/kgc

Kids Get Care (KGC) is a program to ensure that children, regardless of health insurance status, receive early integrated preventive physical, developmental, mental health and oral health services through attachment to a health care home.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

- Seven Kids Get Care hub sites are in operation in community clinics and physician practices located in low-income King County neighborhoods.
- Health care providers at participating clinics are trained to increase risk assessment activities and promote the delivery of preventive oral, physical and developmental health services within the primary care setting.
- KGC case managers at each site facilitate continuing care for families with high-risk children.
- Kids Get Care also trains child care workers and other community staff in the targeted communities about the importance of prevention and a health care home. Staff are trained to screen children for developmental and oral health indicators.
- The community staff screen and connect children with identified needs and those without a health care home to a Kids Get Care hub site. If the family does not live near a participating clinic, they are connected to the Community Health Access Program (CHAP) for appropriate referrals.
- Private sector dentists are recruited to treat Medicaid eligible young children through the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS:

- Over 7,000 children connected to health care homes
- Almost 35,000 children scanned for developmental milestones
- 41% average increase in percentage of two-year-olds up-to-date with Well Child Checks,* from 53% to 75% overall. Note that two-year-olds with up-to-date Well Child Checks have been shown to be 48% less likely to have avoidable hospitalizations (Hakim, *Pediatrics*, July 2001)
- Over 3,000 health care provider and community staff members trained to provide developmental health surveillance and health care home linkage
- 355 community staff members trained in oral health promotion and screening
- 184 primary care providers and medical staff trained to conduct oral health screenings during Well Child Checks
- 66% increase in oral health screenings done by medical providers at one participating clinic
- 49% increase in the number of toddlers seen in the dental clinic as a result of screenings and risk assessments in another participating medical clinic
- Over 100 dentists and dental staff participating in the ABCD program in the first three months
- Produced an educational video on Well Child Checks, and Development and Oral Health “red flags” checklists, available at www.metrokc.gov/health/kgc.

*Well Child Checks are also referred to as EPSDTs

Kids Get Care System Impact

Kids Get Care has improved children's health in a cost-effective way and its basic tenets have sparked system improvements in the organizations with which it has connected.

BASIC TENETS:

- **Services first.** Rather than handing uninsured children an insurance card and wishing them luck in obtaining services, Kids Get Care reverses this sequence by first attaching the child and family to a medical home and health services, and then helping establish eligibility for public coverage.
- **Prevention improves health and can save money.** Kids Get Care increases the percentage of young children up-to-date with well child visits at participating sites. Research shows that when children have consistent preventive care they are less likely to be hospitalized for potentially avoidable reasons and less likely to use the emergency room (Hakim and Christakis, *Pediatrics*, July 2001).
- **Seize the moment.** Kids Get Care case managers have led participating sites through quality improvement processes to encourage the delivery of integrated physical, developmental and oral health services. One Dental Director at a partner clinic remarked, "Before our involvement in Kids Get Care I probably would not have thought about sending a family to a medical clinic. The gift of this program, is that it creates opportunities for doctors and dentists to talk to each other about how poor oral health impacts a child's overall wellness and then together to generate positive and preventive solutions."
- **Web and funnel.** Kids Get Care casts a web of community connections around participating clinic sites and funnels identified children to services. Community staff in the area are trained about appropriate developmental milestones and oral health screening so they can support parents in securing services for their children. If staff find that the family is in need of services they can refer them to a KGC case manager to establish health care home.

SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION:

- **Motivational.** U.S. Senator Patty Murray used the success of Kids Get Care as an example of the innovative local solutions to health care access problems funded by the federal Community Access Program grants when that DHHS program's funding was threatened.
- **Sites to systems.** Three health care agencies were impressed with the Kids Get Care results at their participating clinics and adopted program components throughout their clinic networks.
- **Practices to policies.** Kids Get Care offers one example of a best practice to provide health care homes and well child visits to young children. OMPRO has highlighted the program in meetings of Medicaid health plan medical directors.
- **Replicability.** Kids Get Care is readily replicable for adaptation in other community systems. A "recipe" for Kids Get Care is available at the web site. Seven other counties are interested in adopting Kids Get Care.

Kids Get Care: Innovation, Integration, and Incenting Prevention